

Mr. McLELAN. That is a matter which has not been fully considered or decided upon by the Department yet, but that comes more properly under an amendment of the Act of 1882. It is possible that a clause might be inserted in this Bill, however, in Committee, if we so find it necessary. I will consult the hon. gentleman as to how far it affects the vessels he refers to.

Bill read the second time.

STEAMBOAT INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Mr. McLELAN, in moving the second reading of Bill (No. 121) to amend the Steamboat Inspection Act, 1882, by reducing the fees payable on renewal of engineers' licenses, said: Having considered this matter of the fees to be paid by second class engineers, I propose to make an amendment to the Bill. The annual fee is now reduced from \$5 to \$2. I propose to move an amendment to reduce it to \$1, as I find the difficulty of getting from the second class to the first class is very great and many will be kept in the second class for a long time.

Bill read the second time, and the House resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On section 1,

Mr. STAIRS. I would ask the Minister of Marine and Fisheries whether, in view of what he said just now, that a considerable number of the second class engineers reach that position and stay there, it would not be wiser to amend this Act so as to provide that there shall be no certificate required every year for engineers of the second and third class, but that, when they go up for examination to rise to a higher grade, they should pay the ordinary fee of \$5. I throw out this as a suggestion. I think the amendment proposed is a very wise one, as the fee to be charged to these second and third class engineers for a renewal of their certificates was much too high at \$5. I think there are a large number of second and third class engineers who take their certificate in those classes, and never intend to, and never can, get any higher, and I do not see why, as long as they conduct themselves properly and are sober men, they should have to pay for the renewal when the first class engineers have nothing of the kind to pay. Of course, when they want to get higher, it would be reasonable to charge a fee.

Mr. McLELAN. The fee has been made as low as possible to work the machinery of examinations. I did not say it was impossible for them to get to the first class, but that there are a good many difficulties in the way, and I think, with this small fee, they will be constantly on the watch to get out of the second and third class into the first, and the fee is so small that it cannot be a serious objection. I move that the first clause be amended by striking out the word "two" and inserting the word "one."

Amendment agreed to, Bill reported; considered and amended, and read the third time and passed.

SALE AND DELIVERY OF COAL-

Mr. COSTIGAN moved the second reading of Bill (No. 110) respecting the sale of coal.

Mr. BLAKE. Will the hon. gentleman explain whether under the existing law this Bill will make any provision with reference to the weight of coal as to the long ton or the short ton?

Mr. COSTIGAN. No. This Bill does not pretend to define that point. The Weights and Measures Act, I presume, defines what that weight shall be, whether it shall be the long ton or the short ton.

Mr. AMYOT.

Mr. BLAKE. When we are making a change we ought to secure uniformity as far as possible. We ought not to leave the short ton in one part of the country and with respect to certain articles, and the long ton in another part of the country with respect to another class of transactions. I hope before the Bill finally passes the House the hon. gentleman will consider this point.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman will see that the next Bill proposes to amend the Weights and Measures Act.

Mr. WELDON. There might be some difficulty in reference to steamers taking in coal. It would be very inconvenient in some of the small mines of New Brunswick where they have not the facilities for weighing coal. The Act is more intended, I think, for the sale of coal by retail than for its purchase in the mines.

Mr. STAIRS. As I have had some little experience in coal the last few years, I would like to have an explanation from the hon. Minister. I think the custom has been that in the sale of coal by retail the short ton is used, whereas the long ton is used in weighing coal at the mines. Is it not possible to provide that the same ton should be used in both classes of transactions? I think there is great need that some check should be put upon the sale of coal in the mines as regards weight. It is the general opinion among all who purchase coal that the coal purchased in the mines will overrun its weight, but my experience is just contrary to that. I have seen figures, it is true, which show that for the last four or five years coal purchased in the mines in Nova Scotia has largely overrun, but I think this is chiefly due to the system in the Lower Provinces of measuring coal for retail instead of weighing it. I think if you provide that coal should be sold by weight for retail you will soon have a check upon the mines that you will oblige them to give, at least, fair weight in their sales. I think it would be almost impossible to oblige the owners of mines to weigh all the coal. I understand at present when we buy coal from the mines in Cape Breton or Pictou County, we buy by the ton of 2,240 pounds. But I know that in a great many cases coal is sold by the bulk or carload which is supposed to contain a certain weight, and in such case it is easy indeed to allow these cars to go under weight. I do not say that this under weight is general, but it occurs sometimes.

Mr. MILLS. It seems to me that in so far as this measure regulates contracts between private individuals it is trespassing upon the domain of Provincial Legislatures. What have we to do with saying what the contracts between private parties shall be? We can fix what kind of weights and measures shall be used in the country, but it is well known that at the time the Federal system was adopted the inspection of weights and measures, and every thing relating to contract, were under municipal supervision; and it does seem to me that this Act is beyond our jurisdiction, and is one falling within the purview of our Local Legislatures. We have, of course, the right to fix the kinds of weights and measures that shall be used, but we have no right to deal with the contracts that may be entered into between private parties. If they choose to contract to sell by measure instead of by weight, I think it is their business. It is a civil right, and is not a regulation of trade but an interference with the law of contract.

Mr. COSTIGAN. I do not see anything inconsistent in this Bill with the British North America Act, in declaring that coal shall be sold by weight. I do not think it is interfering at all with any Provincial rights. We declare under the General Act regulating weights and measures, that wheat, for instance, shall be sold at so many pounds per bushel, that oats shall be at so many pounds per bushel, and